

Greater Rockridge NCPC (12Y/13X) - Minutes
Thursday, July 11, 2013
Rockridge Library, College and Manila, Oakland
General Public: 7:00-8:30PM

NCPC:

Frank Castro – Chair
Barbara Minton – Vice Chair
Denise Jorgensen - Treasurer
Karen Ivy – Secretary & Information Officer

7:02 Frank Castro opened the meeting. Thirty-three people attended. The RCPC officers introduced themselves, including Molly Singer, incoming treasurer volunteer. Denise Jorgensen is retiring as treasurer.

Due to an ongoing OPD operation, the agenda was rearranged. OPD status reports will go first.

OPD Status Reports

Officer Chanelle del Rosario introduced herself as the new beat 12 PSO; she was last in beat 10, and has served on a Crime Reduction Team. She has previously worked in beat 12 on Patrol and in training with Officer Maureen Vergara. She has only been PSO on beat 12 a couple of weeks, and is still getting oriented. She reported an aggressive drunk transient at top of College Avenue, who was arrested earlier this week, because several store owners had phoned in the problem. The PSOs have asked for a stay-away order.

Most robberies happen between 10PM – 1AM; they usually happen to people walking alone or in small group, and especially to people using a phone or an iPad. The robbers approach, rob at gunpoint, and run away. Don't loiter out late, especially alone.

Q: what is a PSO? A: PSOs are Problem Solving Officers, they work on situations that can't be handled with a single service call. They also work with Patrol to deal with ongoing issues, they may give Patrol a list of areas to cruise when they have the time.

Officer Jason Trode asked, how many are here from 13X? Four or five hands went up. He reports that burglaries are well down from last month, because residents are calling in suspicious cars and suspicious people. The PSOs have a project open at the southern Lake Temescal parking lot, which has seen lots of auto burglaries. They are actively patrolling, and there are now warning signs in the lot. Victims claim losses of iPads, purses, computers – *don't* leave your life in the car where people can see it. FedEx and UPS deliveries are being stolen off porches, this has led to at least one identity theft issue. The robbers follow the UPS truck. If you're expecting delivery when you won't be home, have a neighbor check for you.

Q: Do you have a description of a car following the UPS truck? A: Not so far. If you see someone who seems to be trailing the delivery truck, call it in, with the license plate if you can.

A resident reported that her daughter returned a pair of shoes to the UPS drop box; the UPS driver brought a shred of a box with their address on it to the door! UPS made her daughter whole, but the crooks seem to be breaking into the secure drop box.

Q: Should we report middle-of-the-night car break-ins? A: You can report those online. If they aren't reported, they never happened, and the officers can't work on them.

Q: What happens when we call about a suspicious person? A: Two things may happen. If *nothing* is going on (no active 911 calls at the time), a patrol officer may turn up and talk to the reported person, ask who they are, and check to see if they are on probation. If the PSOs hear the call, they will *always* respond, if they're in the neighborhood. The more times you call the more likely someone will turn up.

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Q: What about surveillance cameras? Are they worth the money? A: There's no hard data. There's a street up off Skyline with expensive HD cameras on every house, they have photos of everything. There's no evidence yet that there's an actual deterrent.

The big thing in hills now are front door kick-ins, the crooks go in-out, grabbing handy valuables. *Strengthen the doors* – put longer screws (Ed. Note: *at least 3 inches*) on the deadbolt and door. That'll slow them down. Also get loud audio alarms – they'll attract attention.

Q: Home depot sells a front door block. You can only release it from inside, you install it 2-3 feet above or below the deadbolt. They claim it will take 8000 lb of pressure. A: These guys are trying for speed, anything that slows them is good. OPD usually has a safety fair once a year that explains all this, including how to reinforce a door. Watch for the announcement. The thicker the door, the better.

District 2 command staff

Captain Anthony Toribio commented that we have very good PSOs on our beats here. He introduced Patrol Officer Patrick Davis and Sergeant Jim Rullamas, the patrol supervisor for District 2.

Sergeant Rullamas said, "I've been in OPD for 21 years now but Patrol is new to me, I spent most of my time in Homicide Investigations. A lot has changed in 17 years. Patrick Davis is the beat 12 patrol officer. The beat officer is Mike Land, he couldn't make it but he's aware of the burglary issues. Patrick Davis is the quietest guy on the staff, but very good man. I'm very pleased with my staff."

Officer Patrick Davis said he's been 13 years with OPD, and this is his second year on beat 12. He focuses patrols where the most auto burglaries and robberies happen, looking for suspicious cars. If suspects see OPD in the area, they usually won't do the crime. He and Officer Land answered a burglary call – the woman had a cheap security camera on her kitchen window, she got clear photos of the man casing the place, and then trying to break in.

Q: Can you arrest him on that? Officer Davis: Once we identify him, yes, we could arrest on that.

Don't walk down the street distracted by your phone; I ask a victim, where did the guy come from, and they say, I don't know. Be aware of who's around you. And *don't leave* valuables in your car.

A resident reported that they're doing donuts again near Canning and 59th. Is that happening all through beat 12? It used to be more common. Officer Davis: It often happens around 57th and Ayala, I cruise that area regularly.

Q: What's a donut? Officer Davis: They drive the car around in circles at high speed.

A resident commented, "I've seen you walking on College Ave., it's great." Officer Davis: Yes, I try to walk up and down, just to let them know I'm there.

Q: Tell us about the interactive crime map, you can get to it off the Oakland police site. I was robbed in my own driveway. I was glad to see that map is available. Captain Toribio: That's crimemapping.com.

Captain Toribio said, "Let's give the officers a hand and let them go back to work, they have projects to work on."

Frank Castro said he has asked that the patrol officers attend our meetings as well as the PSOs, so people will know who they are and can ask them questions.

Captain Toribio said that he wants his officers to attend meetings, talk to people, become involved.

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Captain Anthony Toribio, District 2

He's been with OPD for 23 years. He was area commander of districts 1-2 in 2008-10 (beats 1-13). He's been the Inspector General, the interim deputy chief of the Office of Risk Management, Assistant Chief; he's now area commander for District 2, beats 8-14.

In 2010 OPD changed the patrol structure; in 2011-12 they changed Patrol from 5 to 6 patrol districts, with one captain over 2 or 3 districts. This was too big to manage, it was too hard to hold the captains accountable. The city hired an outside consultant (the Wasserman Group), who recommended we go to 5 patrol districts with an accountable captain in each district. That's now police industry standard; agencies such as Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and even much smaller agencies have a geographic command structure. OPD did this first only in east Oakland, which has 2 districts. Captain Tull and Captain Joyner are assigned there. They worked out some kinks, and on June 8 expanded the districts city wide.

Captain Toribio was in Boston in June, then took some time off; July 1 was his first day on the new job. He likes being area commander of a smaller, more manageable geographic area. It's easier to stay on top of things, attend community meetings, work with PSOs. This reorganization is positive for the community as well as for OPD. Positive things:

- Focus on reducing crime, with daily morning call-in Tues-Fri. They also have weekend reviews and a biweekly Compstat meeting.
- The Captain reads every crime report (robberies, shootings, etc.), and visits businesses that have been robbed. If businesses have security video from which they can extract photos, OPD can send the images around to all officers within hours. If the Captain sees something an officer missed, he can have someone do follow-up. They need to identify patterns and trends.
- Twice weekly meetings with the Criminal Investigation Division. District 2 will get two investigators, assigned to the Captain; they will focus on identifying trends and patterns, gathering criminal intelligence, and conducting investigations. Dedicated staff should enhance the ability to investigate crime. Officers apply to get these positions and there is a formal process to select them. Build a dedicated Crime Reduction Team. District 2 hasn't had one in years. The team can help the PSOs with beat projects, and do proactive enforcement in hotspots. The team should get out and walk the business district, to supplement patrol and the PSOs.
- Strengthen community relations: the Captain is available by email (atoribio@oaklandnet.com). He has formed an advisory committee; Frank Castro is a member, as is Patricia Rose, and local business owners and religious leaders. The committee will give opinions and recommendations on crime strategies, and strengthen community partnerships.
- Improved officer performance. How often have officers come to meeting, introduced themselves, and spoken to the meeting as they did tonight? Not often. There will be more of this; citizens should know their police officers.
- Changing how we do initial investigation: officers will do a target-hardening assessment, and canvass the neighbors, to see if anyone saw anything. They may find a witness; at least they let neighbors know there was a crime, and let the officers meet the residents of the beat. He expects officers to treat every call as if it's the only call standing for service.

"I'm proud of being an Oakland police officer. We're here to provide professional service."

OPD developments you may not know about:

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- Over 30 officers are about to graduate from Field Training, 5 will be assigned in North Oakland
- There will be an academy in September, there's one going on right now; there will be another in December. We hope to bring the number of officers up.
- Hiring 20 civilian service technicians – they can take reports, tow cars, etc.; and give uniformed officers more time to do beat work.
- Hiring 5 new dispatchers, and more lab technicians.
- OPD is awaiting a shipment of 74 marked police cars.
- They're getting new computers – there are issues with radios, and with IT, but the chief is energetic and committed to making the department better. The Captain is very optimistic.

Crime happens late at night. The peak times are from 6PM to 2AM, the high time is around 10PM. Criminals don't live in Rockridge, they come in; this is a target-rich area. OPD is looking at crime and adjusting their strategies. The two officers who signed in to the meeting and didn't stay were bicycle patrol officers, they ride Rockridge, Telegraph, Piedmont, and Adams Point 4 days a week. On their second day out, they were flagged on an in-progress assault and arrested the suspect, preventing further injury to the victim. The Captain sends weekly emails to the command staff detailing what areas need focus; he wants to identify the crimes that need attention. He plans to use [Nixle](#) – you can subscribe to the alerts yourself. He can send a message out on Nixle and get responses from citizens.

Our PSOs have worked undercover operations and recently conducted the first buy-bust operation in a long time. They've run 3 other undercover operations that led to arrest of a Craigslist robber and other criminals. The Captain is very happy to be in charge of District 2; he has a sense of ownership. He regularly patrols the district either in a car or on foot for 30 min. to an hour every day. He looks forward to working with citizens but we need your help.

National Night Out is August 6, he'll be going to block parties. He encourages community members to participate in this special event to bring the community together.

Dan Kalb will have a community meeting July 31, location TBD; The Captain will be there, with his command staff and the PSOs.

Q: is your office in the district or downtown? A: It's downtown.

A resident commented: I've been doing this since 2004, I've seen OPD people come and go. You are the most articulate I've ever seen, you want to talk to us; we're very happy you're here.

Q: What is your email address? A: atoribio@oaklandnet.com.

Q: if we see a pattern of robberies, we can email Officer del Rosario – should we email you too?
A: Yes.

Q: Can Nixle alerts say "district 2" in the title? We get too much stuff. A: We can do that.

Q: Do we have enough patrol officers? A: No. We have 7 patrol squads to cover the entire district, 24/7. It isn't enough, because of vacations, illness, training, and attrition. We backfill on overtime, which means officers burn out, and they're working areas they aren't familiar with.

Q: what are boundaries of District 2? A: oaklandpolice.com has a map that shows the district; the boundaries zigzag: from west Grand, around the lake, up Lakeshore, then over to Berkeley and Emeryville. District 2 surrounds Piedmont. We've had a series of robberies done by 1 individual; the gang enforcement officer is already talking to Berkeley, and will convene a meeting with Berkeley and Piedmont.

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Frank Castro said, "We're amazingly lucky to have him as our captain. There's a link to the [district 2 map](#) in an article on the NCPC web site."

Frank Castro explained that he wears many hats: NCPC chair, block captain, Neighborhood Watch steering committee, Community Policing Advisory Board. This is an exciting time even though we're understaffed. At the meeting last night a CPAB member was complaining about his new captain, who didn't show up at meetings. We're doing better.

Priorities come from you. You tell us what's going wrong. Frank asked a resident to report on his problem and why it's better.

Resident: I live next to a noisy bar, The Hut. College student patrons kept me awake late at night. The NCPC put me in touch with the Alcoholic Beverage Dept., and they worked with the bar, and it's better, I can sleep now. It's amazing. My problem is solved but I still come because I need to know what's going on.

Frank Castro explained that Captain Toribio wants the community to tell him what we want him to do, as the new captain – give him general trends. He's thinking of having the Crime Response Team walking down College at high traffic times. It's been 3-4 years since we had walking officers on College. We need more residents to turn up, and tell us what you want us to do.

A resident said, "Our street had 5 break-ins this year, after years of *no* problems. People on the block never knew this organization existed – how do we get this information to move around? We need to change the police from uniforms to people."

A resident noted that, even in the "old days", if you had a block party, the patrolman would come by, up to a couple of years ago. How do the police work with other city departments to prevent crime? Do they report dead street lights, and trees that need trimming? Frank Castro explained that the city is installing LED street lights, which should really help, since they don't burn out for years. Captain Toribio has identified some hot-spot areas. Karen Ivy reminded the meeting that citizens have to tell Public Works if street trees need trimming or lights are out; especially for lights, because Public Works doesn't work after 5 PM.

A resident complained that, in the 63rd and Colby area, they've tried to start neighborhood watch groups 3 times, and they all fizzle – people in the area don't come to meetings. Two career couples with kids just can't get out to evening meetings. How do we communicate other than through meetings? Email helps some. Frank Castro explained that neighborhood watch doesn't necessarily mean sitting around discussing crime. It can be a table with a couple bottles of wine on a Friday night. The main thing is to know who your neighbors are; that doesn't require a formal meeting.

A resident said they used to have a list of long-term residents; that list went away when neighborhood watch came in, why can't we have that? Frank Castro: you can have it. The basis of neighborhood watch is to know your neighbors. Public safety starts on the block level.

A resident asked, couldn't we put a neighborhood flyer in RockRidge News? Frank Castro said yes, you'd have to contact the RockRidge News. An RCPC member reminded the meeting that we have to be careful how neighborhood notices of suspicious people are worded, the RockRidge News has some legal status as a newspaper. Another resident commented that you can do this by email.

A resident asked, if Captain Toribio is interested in out-of-box ideas, could OPD talk to UPS drivers, mail carriers, etc., and ask them what they've noticed on their routes? Frank: We'll pass that on.

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Crime Statistics

We take information from OPD's data feed for the period since the last meeting, to produce these statistics. We group the reports into 4 categories: crimes against the person; property crimes (not automobile); automobile-related crimes; and quality of life crimes. There were 11 robberies in beat 12Y in a 21 day period; that's every other day.

Q: Could you add the time of day? Frank Castro: I can put that in. But the time in the incident report is the time Dispatch was called, not when the crime occurred. Especially for residential burglaries, the time could have nothing to do with when it actually happened. Burglaries happen when you aren't there. Robberies happen where it's dark and isolated. Don't set yourself up as a victim.

A resident complained that he's lived here 17 years and never heard of the NCPC, and he never sees the RockRidge News (the RCPC representative admitted it doesn't get distributed above about Margarido). How do we get the news out to other groups? Frank Castro asked, Would you like to head that committee? The RCPC representative said they always leave a couple of hundred copies of RockRidge News at the library, feel free to come down and take some to hand out on your block.

Molly Singer introduced herself, volunteering to become Treasurer as Denise Jorgensen retires. The meeting accepted her nomination and voted to accept her services.

Frank Castro reported that a district wide robbery workshop is scheduled for October, exact date TBD (tentatively October 12). Watch the Rockridge News, and the NCPC Yahoo groups, for details. The workshop will show how to harden your house, how not to be a victim. They expect a huge event which will draw lots of people.

Review the last priorities for update

- The illegal auto repair shop is still a problem, we'll leave it.
- We'll drop the incident of the pedestrian who was shot; OPD tells us there's simply no leads, nobody saw anything, the victims can't recognize the assailant. We'll have the PSOs focus on robberies in the area generally.
- Officer Trode mentioned the project at Lake Temescal parking lot, we'll add that to 13X priorities.
- There seems to be a concentration of robberies in the "Shafter corridor" (Miles, Shafter, Locksley), can we add that? Yes, we can.

NCPC Priorities for July 2013:

12Y:

1. The illegal auto repair shop on 63rd St. is active again
2. Robberies, burglaries in 12Y generally,
3. Robberies on the Shafter corridor (Miles, Shafter, Locksley) – street lighting very poor there, can we get the lights replaced there ASAP? And more patrols.

13X:

1. Auto burglaries near the school around Golden Gate and Ocean View.
2. Parking past the *No Parking* limit sign on Golden Gate is making it really hard to drive up the street.
3. Smashed car windows, auto burglaries near south entrance of Lake Temescal

NCPC meetings are normally the SECOND Thursday of the month.

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*Next NCPC meeting is **Thursday, August 8, 2013** at 7:00 PM
Rockridge Library Community Room, College & Manila
See you there and stay safe!*

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